

AGENDA

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 18 October 2010**

Time: **9.30 am**

Place: **The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford**

Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

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Agenda for the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chairman	Councillor PJ Edwards
Vice-Chairman	Councillor WLS Bowen
	Councillor PA Andrews
	Councillor ME Cooper
	Councillor AE Gray
	Councillor KG Grumbley
	Councillor TM James
	Councillor RI Matthews
	Councillor PM Morgan
	Councillor AT Oliver
	Councillor PJ Watts

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The Council's Members' Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare against an Agenda item(s) the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. Councillors have to decide first whether or not they have a personal interest in the matter under discussion. They will then have to decide whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.

A personal interest is an interest that affects the Councillor more than most other people in the area. People in the area include those who live, work or have property in the area of the Council. Councillors will also have a personal interest if their partner, relative or a close friend, or an organisation that they or the member works for, is affected more than other people in the area. If they do have a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay and take part and vote in the meeting.

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AGENDA

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
3. MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2010.	1 - 8
4. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the Committee could scrutinise in the future.	
5. LEADER'S REPORT To receive a report from the Leader of the Council identifying key issues from the last six months.	9 - 14
6. SHARED SERVICES To provide information and obtain comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be fed back to Cabinet by the Chairman at the Cabinet meeting on 21 October 2010.	15 - 16
7. INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES UPDATE To provide a further progress report on Information Communication and Technology (ICT) service issues requested following the scrutiny review of ICT and subsequent updates.	17 - 20
8. PROJECT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT/FINANCIAL CONTROL OF CAPITAL SCHEMES To advise Members on the project management and financial controls in place for Capital Schemes.	21 - 24
9. WORK PROGRAMME To consider the Committee's work programme.	25 - 30

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing, Children's Services, Community Services, Environment, and Health. An Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises corporate matters and co-ordinates the work of these Committees.

The purpose of the Committees is to ensure the accountability and transparency of the Council's decision making process.

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

- Help in developing Council policy
- Probe, investigate, test the options and ask the difficult questions before and after decisions are taken
- Look in more detail at areas of concern which may have been raised by the Cabinet itself, by other Councillors or by members of the public
- "call in" decisions - this is a statutory power which gives Scrutiny Committees the right to place a decision on hold pending further scrutiny.
- Review performance of the Council
- Conduct Best Value reviews
- Undertake external scrutiny work engaging partners and the public

Formal meetings of the Committees are held in public and information on your rights to attend meetings and access to information are set out overleaf

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public Involvement at Scrutiny Committee Meetings

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There are also two other ways in which you can directly contribute at Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committee meetings.

1. Identifying Areas for Scrutiny

At the meeting the Chairman will ask the members of the public present if they have any issues which they would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, however, there will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Councillors will research the issue and consider whether it should form part of the Committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.

Please note that the Committees can only scrutinise items which fall within their specific remit (see below). If a matter is raised which falls within the remit of another Scrutiny Committee then it will be noted and passed on to the relevant Chairman for their consideration.

2. Questions from Members of the Public for Consideration at Scrutiny Committee Meetings and Participation at Meetings

You can submit a question for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee meeting so long as the question you are asking is directly related to an item listed on the agenda. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it **no later than two working days before the meeting** to the Committee Officer. This will help to ensure that an answer can be provided at the meeting. Contact details for the Committee Officer can be found on the front page of this agenda.

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(Please note that the Scrutiny Committees are not able to discuss questions relating to personal or confidential issues.)

Remits of Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committees

Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing

Statutory functions for adult social services and Strategic Housing.

Children's Services

Provision of services relating to the well-being of children including education, health and social care, and youth services.

Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Cultural Services, Community Safety (including Crime and Disorder), Economic Development and Youth Services.

Health

Scrutiny of the planning, provision and operation of health services affecting the area.

Environment

*Environmental Issues
Highways and Transportation*

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Strategy and Finance

Resources

Corporate and Customer Services

Human Resources

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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
- Access to a public Register stating the names, addresses and wards of all Councillors with details of the membership of Cabinet and of all Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have a reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees.
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- Copy any of the documents mentioned above to which you have a right of access, subject to a reasonable charge (20p per sheet subject to a maximum of £5.00 per agenda plus a nominal fee of £1.50 for postage).
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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Monday 27 September 2010 at 9.30 am

Present: Councillor PJ Edwards (Chairman)
Councillor WLS Bowen (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: PA Andrews, ME Cooper, KG Grumbley, TM James, PM Morgan and PJ Watts

In attendance: Councillors JP French (Cabinet Member - Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources)

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors AS Gray and AT Oliver. Apologies were also received from Councillors H Bramer (Cabinet Member – Resources) and RJ Phillips (Leader of the Council).

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor PJ Edwards declared a personal interest in agenda item 5: Shared Services update report, because of a job held by a relative.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY

The Chairman of Breinton Parish Council raised a number of questions relating to the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

The Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Democratic advised that the questions needed to be referred to officers in the first instance. She would, as Monitoring Officer consider the criticisms of the consultation process. The Committee could consider the matters raised about the robustness of the consultation process at the end of that process, if they remained unresolved.

19. SHARED SERVICES UPDATE REPORT

(Councillor PJ Edwards declared a personal interest.)

The Committee considered an update on the Shared Services programme (SSP) and was invited to submit its views on the proposals.

The Interim Assistant Chief Executive – Legal and Democratic gave a presentation. This covered the overall ambition for Herefordshire Public Services; the original statement of the drivers for the development of shared services and their most recent description; and the objectives of the programme (cost savings, speedy benefit realisation; promotion and

regeneration of Herefordshire; protecting employment in the County and presenting a cost-effective solution for the public sector). It outlined changes in terms of the national and local context, their bearing on the SSP; and the priority drivers suggested by the Business Transformation Board on 2 September in response to these changes. The savings identified in the business case for shared services were also reported, noting that these were under review.

A supplementary paper had been circulated on the 9 potential organisational models for delivery of shared services. The presentation commented on the criteria used to evaluate these models. The four models considered viable were described in the agenda papers. The Interim Assistant Chief Executive remarked on the emerging view that one model might not suit all services within the shared services programme and a range of models may therefore need to be developed. She also noted that establishing delivery models locally would be more likely to secure the objective of retaining employment within the County.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- The challenge of building on the work by the Council and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to integrate health and social care services to incorporate Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust (HHT) in the delivery of a shared services programme for the three organisations was discussed. The Interim Assistant Chief Executive commented that HHT had been involved in the programme from the outset. She noted that the PCT currently provided HHT with financial services and it would be more costly to HHT if it were not involved in the SSP.
- Concern was expressed about the time the shared services programme had taken to develop and that the changes now proposed in the recent Health White Paper, in particular GP Commissioning, would mean that the programme would be overtaken by events.

The Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) commented on the progress that had been made in integrating health and social care services. She emphasised the importance of delivering savings quickly, to protect service delivery in the face of demographic pressures on budgets locally allied to the imminent national budget reductions. She also expressed the wish to protect Hereford Hospital and to protect jobs within the County, recognising the difficulty, given communication routes and other factors, in finding alternative work compared with some other parts of the Country.

- The Chairman of the PCT Board commented that the PCT would not be able to prescribe what GP consortia chose to do. However, the PCT was working with GPs and believed there was a shared vision with support for coterminosity of commissioners and providers.
- Members supported the objective of protecting employment within the County. The Interim Assistant Chief Executive observed that there were a range of potential clients for services, for example Voluntary Sector organisations that did not have national support services.
- The consensus was that the proposed changes must lead to improved efficiency and cost savings, be simple, with no overlapping layers of bureaucracy and be easy to deliver.

The Interim Assistant Chief Executive commented that the importance of streamlining governance arrangements and keeping them simple was recognised.

- Members emphasised the importance of the contract with the eventual service provider(s) being robust and ensuring that as commissioners of services the Council and its partners had control of costs to avoid the possibility that new arrangements ended up being more expensive than the current ones.
- There was support for the idea that, to maintain flexibility, different models might be appropriate for different services within the SSP. It was suggested that for the Committee to be able to express a firm view on the proposals a matrix needed to be produced setting out the pros and cons of each model for each service within the scope of the SSP. Further detail was also required on the costs of each option, recognising that one of the key objectives was to deliver savings. The Committee received assurance that this would be done as part of the appraisal process and reported fully in due course.
- Asked to comment on the timescale for delivering the SSP the Assistant Chief Executive said that agreements would need to be negotiated and signed by the Partners. However, in her experience these processes could be completed more swiftly when the groundwork had been done in advance, which she believed to be the case in Herefordshire. The aim was to have a shadow company in place by the end of December, becoming operational by April 2011.

RESOLVED:

- That (a) it be noted that the business case for Shared Services is being reviewed;**
- (b) it be noted that a number of options were being considered as models for delivering shared services in Herefordshire and that Cabinet would be deciding in October on the options available; and**
- (c) a further report be made to the Committee in advance of the report to Cabinet in October, taking into account the comments made by the Committee as outlined above.**

20. EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS - HEREFORDSHIRE'S RESPONSE

The Committee was invited to note the arrangements in place in Herefordshire for responding to the Health White Paper and associated consultation documents, and to comment on the proposed response.

A supplementary paper had been circulated setting out a draft response and the notes of a partnership consultation event hosted by the Committee.

The Deputy Chief Executive commented that the intention was that the final response would seek to focus on the strategic working of health and social care services, based on the integration work done within the County and seek to urge that a national framework should accommodate the needs of Herefordshire as a rural County.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- The Chairman of the PCT Board commented on the significance of the changes proposed within the White Paper. However, she stated that these reflected the direction of travel already being taken within the County and she was keen to hold up the integration work in the County to Government as an example of what could be achieved.

A lot of the detail behind the White Paper was still unknown but the PCT Board wished to emphasise the benefits of co-terminosity between commissioners and the local authority, the importance of flexibility to facilitate solutions that were appropriate locally having regard to the rural nature of the County, and the need for clarity on the role of the proposed Health and Wellbeing Boards to ensure that they were effective. She also highlighted the importance of ensuring that there was accountability, noting the GP consortia were to be accountable to one national board.

- Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that the specific needs of the County were emphasised.
- It was recognised that the reduction in central targets would be likely to lead to an increase the diversity of service provision and to a degree therefore increase the postcode lottery of access to health services. The need to consider targeted provision was discussed. It was also acknowledged that there needed to be Centres of Excellence and that Herefordshire could not provide all services locally. The key was to seek to ensure that decision making power over service provision was retained locally even if the service itself had to be delivered elsewhere.

RESOLVED:

- That (a) the arrangements in place to respond to the White Paper and associated consultation documents be noted; and**
- (b) it be requested that account be taken of the Committee's discussion in finalising the response, noting in particular the wish that the specific needs of the County are emphasised within the response.**

(The Committee adjourned between 11 am and 11.05 am.)

21. INTEGRATED CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 2010-11

The Committee considered an overview of performance against the Joint Corporate Plan 2010-13 for the first quarter of 2010-11.

The Policy Officer presented the report stating that the report on performance for the second quarter of 2010/11 was imminent and the data in the report before the Committee was therefore somewhat dated. Because a large number of indicators were reported annually, in-year judgements could only be made on a selection of indicators. Performance for the first quarter showed that of those indicators where data was available performance against 24 was on or ahead of target and 13 behind target. This was comparable to the position for the first quarter in the previous year.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- A briefing note was requested on the eight risks in the Corporate Risk Register which required the appropriate Director to review and update the entry.
- It was suggested that organisational changes would have a bearing on staffing levels. The Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) reported that a report was due to be produced by the end of October detailing the pattern of staffing variations since the authority's formation in 1998.
- The changes to the format of the performance report were noted and the need to ensure that performance reporting was meaningful was emphasised.
- It was noted that a report was shortly expected on scope for the Council to use its

own land and buildings to provide affordable housing and it was requested that confirmation be provided on when the report was to be considered.

- That work by the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Review Group suggested that the figure on the number of anti-social behaviour incidents recorded by the police did not reflect the position on the ground. It was suggested that there could be multiple reports of the same incident that were being logged, distorting the picture.

RESOLVED:

That (a) the report be noted; and

- (b) a briefing note be provided on the eight risks in the Corporate Risk Register which required the appropriate Director to review and update the Register entry.**

22. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2010/11

The Committee considered the forecast financial position for both revenue and capital budgets to 31 March, 2011, an update on Directorates' recovery plans instigated to address projected overspends and noted treasury management activities in the first four months of 2010/11.

The Head of Financial Services presented the report. She stated that the updated position to the end of August projected the same level of overspend on the revenue budget as set out in the report (£1.9m). Directorates had presented recovery plans and these were being monitored. However, the plans would take time to take effect and recovery might not be accomplished within the financial year. She commented briefly on capital expenditure and drew attention to action being taken on the Council's borrowing, involving a move to short term loans, with the benefit of lower interest rates.

The pressures on social care expenditure and the prospect of the recovery plan being successful were discussed. The Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) stated that other local authorities had managed to control expenditure on social care by changing working practices amongst other things. She encouraged scrutiny to challenge the pace at which changes were being made within the Authority.

Briefing notes were requested on the use of the spend to save reserve, recoupment of Dedicated Schools grant for the Hereford Academy and the implications of John Kyrle High School achieving academy status; how school balances held by the authority were managed; and the outcome of negotiations on the SHAW contract.

RESOLVED:

That (a) the report be noted: and

- (b) briefing notes be circulated on the use of the spend to save reserve, recoupment of Dedicated Schools grant for the Hereford Academy and the implications of John Kyrle High School achieving academy status; how school balances held by the authority were managed; and the outcome of negotiations on the SHAW contract.**

23. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC ABOUT SERVICES AND ACCESS TO THOSE SERVICES.

The Chairman of the Review Group presented the report drawing attention to the recommendations.

The Head of Partnership Support, lead officer for the Review, commented on how the review had been undertaken, highlighting the fact that it appeared that the Council did not know enough about how the Community itself wanted the Council to communicate with it.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- The review report had commented at some length on the merits of the Council's magazine for residents: Herefordshire Matters. The Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) questioned the evidence base for some of the Review Group's recommendations.

In response it was acknowledged that members of the Review Group had differing views and had not reached a firm agreement on the future of Herefordshire Matters, proposing further review by the Executive. One member of the Review Group reaffirmed his view that there were better and more cost-effective ways of communicating and noted the adverse public comment the expenditure on the publication attracted.

A Member of the Committee suggested that once more work had been done to establish how residents wanted to receive information consideration could then be given to how effective Herefordshire Matters was, including the size of the publication and its frequency.

- The amount of identified expenditure on external communication and the difficulty in establishing the precise sum expended was noted.
- It was suggested that, whilst not everyone used the internet, there should be greater emphasis on developing the website and, whilst one recommendation touched on this issue, the importance of keeping information on the website up to date needed to be impressed upon staff and rigorously enforced.
- The Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) commented that a separate review of the Communications Unit itself and its operation had been undertaken by consultants and aspects of that review would feed into the Executive's response to the Scrutiny Review. The Deputy Chief Executive commented on work to strengthen central management of communications, an issue upon which the scrutiny review had also touched.

RESOLVED:

That (a) the findings of the Scrutiny Review of communication with the public about services and access to those services be agreed and recommended to the Executive for consideration; and

- (b) the Executive's response to the Review including an action plan be reported to the first available meeting of the Committee after the Executive has approved its response.**

24. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF THE WINTER WEATHER AND THE RESPONSE TO IT - EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE

The Committee considered Cabinet's response to the recommendations made to it in the Scrutiny Review of the impact of the winter weather and the response to it.

The Assistant Director (Public Health) commented on progress that had already been made in response to the recommendations that had been made in the review, all of which had been agreed by Cabinet.

It was noted that three Members of the Committee had met informally with the Highways Network Manager, given the timescale for finalising and approving the Winter Service Plan, to accommodate recommendation L of the review, that the proposed Winter Service Plan for 2010/11 should be the subject of pre-decision scrutiny. In forming that recommendation, the Committee's view had been that there was scope to extend at least some priority routes to some schools and sheltered housing facilities and urban estate roads. The Highways Network Manager had advised those Members that whilst only minor amendments had been made to the priority routes themselves, he considered that changes in the draft Plan did address the Committee's concerns.

RESOLVED:

That (a) Cabinet's response to the findings of the review of the impact of the winter weather and the response to it be noted; and

(b) a further report on progress in response to the Review be made after six months with consideration then being given to the need for any further reports to be made.

25. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programmes of the scrutiny committees.

RESOLVED: That the current work programmes be approved as a basis for further development, noting the addition to the Committee's own work programme of a further report on shared services and a report on the Executive's consideration of affordable housing options.

The meeting ended at 12.25 pm

CHAIRMAN

MEETING:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	LEADER'S REPORT

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council identifying key issues from the last six months.

Introduction and Background

1. The Constitution provides regular opportunities for the Leader to report to full Council and in particular provides that he make an annual report to Council. Accordingly, rather than requesting an annual presentation to this Committee as well, the Committee has made provision in the Committee's work programme for a half-yearly update from the Leader.
2. A report is attached.

Background Papers

None identified.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Tony Geeson – Head of Policy & Performance,
on (01432) 261855

REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – OCTOBER 2010

Introduction

The shape of the coalition government's programme is now even clearer than in my previous reports to the full Council.

- There will be significant reductions in local government funding which is not being afforded the protection given to other sectors. The implications will become clearer in two days time with the CSR 2010 report on October 20th. However the precise local implications may not be fully clear until the local government settlement in mid December
- In the longer term the local government resource review is due to report in the summer of 2011. However many of the recommendations of the Lyons review already appear to have been ruled out.
- We have already seen mid-year funding cuts as a result of the emergency budget on 10th June. Herefordshire's revenue grant reduction was £1.158m of area based grants (ABG). A further £640k of capital grant was also removed. A further £836k of grants will not be received but, as these had not been included in the Council's 2010-11 budget, no further reductions were required. The long term future of ABG itself is unknown as the national debate focuses on the balance between cutting local authorities general or specific ring-fenced grants.
- In addition the age qualification for free bus passes is to rise to 65 and we have already had to cease the free swimming programme for local people aged under 16 or over 60. New borrowing powers are promised which will allow local authorities like Herefordshire to borrow against predicted growth in the locally raised business rates
- Big Society places more responsibility on individuals but also means smaller central and local government. This Council is going to have to make difficult choices in the next few months but you will already be aware of initiatives on shared services – discussed by Cabinet in July - and organisational design which is challenging what all Directorates do and the suitability of our current procedures & structures for the challenges ahead. These are specifically intended to protect front line services to vulnerable people as much as possible.
- Projects like shared services and organisational design are significant in themselves but they are just part of the enormously wide ranging transformation programme we are undertaking across both the Council and NHS Herefordshire – Rising to the Challenge. This has five work-streams; customer-focus, communities first, streamlining the business, better services and people & performance. The scope of Rising to the Challenge includes delivering the customer strategy, developing locality working, rationalising office accommodation, improving our procurement and commercial expertise, creating an integrated care organisation, improving mental health services and ensuring that our workforce is equipped for the future and fully engaged in getting there. All of these will change and improve the way services are delivered directly, or release resources which can be used to the maximum benefit.
- We are not alone in making changes; West Mercia Police are also restructuring while Advantage West Midlands, the Audit Commission and the Commission for Rural Communities are amongst the bodies to be abolished.

Throughout all of this we will be looking to sustain financial stability and the Council's growing reputation for innovation. Examples of our forward thinking include:

- The remodelling of tourism deliver discussed last month by the Cabinet and
- The programme of support for libraries. We are one of 10 national pilot schemes with Shropshire.
- The approval of a joint commercial strategy by Cabinet in July offering the potential to save between £3-5m over the next two years on an HPS spend of £440m a year

I do not intend to stray specifically into individual Cabinet member areas but will look at issues that affect the overall strategy and direction of the Council and, in particular, the challenges ahead.

Localism and Decentralisation

I covered this in my report to Council on 16 July. If the timetable outlined in the Queen's Speech is maintained by November there will be:

- A power of general competence to Council's like Herefordshire
- Greater powers devolved to Council's and neighbourhoods giving greater control for local communities over housing and planning decisions
- Confirmation the abolition of regional spatial strategies – no central Government role in resolving the growing national shortage of affordable housing
- A right for communities to bid to take over local, state run services.
- No more national Standards Board
- Potential for a return of a committee system instead of Cabinet & Scrutiny arrangements
- A power for local residents to instigate referendums on any local issue such as service closure and veto excessive council tax increases.
- Authority to create local enterprise partnerships (LEP's) replacing regional development agencies. These joint local authority–business bodies will promote local economic development. We have already applied for a joint LEP with Shropshire & Telford.
- A requirement to publish the salaries and expenses of senior officers – we have already done this.

Equity and Excellence – liberating the NHS

Our partnership with NHS Herefordshire is one example where we are ahead of much of the country. We must ensure that the proposed abolition of PCT's and Strategic health authorities does not harm our local initiatives. For instance, if the population sizes for the new GP commissioning groups are centrally defined and are set artificially high, they will not suit sparse rural areas like Herefordshire. We will need to consider:

- How the local health and well being board will work best locally and its relation to the current health scrutiny arrangements
- How a local public health service will integrate properly into our other services
- How we will truly lead future improvements in Herefordshire's health & well-being.

There is of course an independent commission of Andrew Dilnot, Lord Warner and Dame Williams considering how to ensure responsible and sustainable funding for long-term care which will report within a year. In the meantime we await the forthcoming social care white paper. Clearly these are matters of great interest given our growing proportion of frail elderly residents.

Education

We are quite rightly proud of educational attainment in the county. The Academies Act passed in July allows:

- Existing schools to become academies with

- Freedom from local authority control and the national curriculum as well as the ability to set their own pay and conditions and
- Freedom to spend the remaining money a local authority currently spends on their behalf. We will need to work with our schools, whatever their status, to ensure that children and young people in Herefordshire get the best possible education and we will need to carefully consider any implications of new Academies on our local authority services so that the other schools in Herefordshire are not adversely affected.

New free schools, set up in response to parental demand, may become a reality nationally by September 2011. We all know the difficulties of funding smaller schools to maintain the full range of the national curriculum. In line with existing policy, Cabinet recommended the closure of Dilwyn school in July 2010.

If the forthcoming Education Bill becomes law, it will remove the requirement for Children's Trust Boards and joint children & young people's plans as well as the duty of schools to co-operate with Children's trusts. The duty to cooperate will remain for a range of partners, including health. While any reduction in bureaucracy is to be welcomed we must continue to work together to raise education standard even higher and protect vulnerable children. Partnership working is crucial to this and we will continue to focus on the needs of children and young people in Herefordshire and make the most of our strong relationships with other organisations.

Communities

The various communities that make up Herefordshire are one of our greatest strengths. I look forward to:

- The overhaul of alcohol licensing giving more power to ourselves and West Mercia police to meet local concerns
- The new homes bonus where local communities who build more homes will be rewarded by getting more funding to use on local priorities. The proposals will be finalised after the CSR in October.
- The devolution from central government of powers to confirm local nature reserves.

Local economy

The growing local economy offers the best way to improve health and well-being in Herefordshire given reductions in public expenditure over the next few years. As noted above it could also increase our borrowing powers as well as raising business rates. In the last few months:

- Work has begun on the new state of the art livestock market showing our faith in the local agricultural economy
- Herefordshire Futures has been created to secure private sector investment that will assist in delivering the priorities expressed by the public of Herefordshire in the Shaping the Place consultation including better paid jobs, new enterprise, affordable housing, better transport links and improved higher education facilities.
- Investment in the city centre continues to remain a priority of the administration and on the back of the £4 million worth of spend on the fabric of the city centre immediate priorities include the maturing of the shop local card and the refurbishing of the Butter Market.

We still await our final settlement before Christmas when we will know whether the scale of the reductions we have indicated will be sufficient but I remain committed to the belief that the Council must as a matter of principle make its savings initially in how it delivers its services rather than the services themselves. I would hope that I would have that support across all political groups in the authority and I look forward to reading their alternatives.

MEETING:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	SHARED SERVICES UPDATE REPORT
REPORT BY:	SHARED SERVICES TEAM

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To provide information and obtain comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be fed back to Cabinet by the Chairman at the Cabinet meeting on 21 October 2010

Recommendation

THAT: the Committee considers the shared services proposals and provides feedback to Cabinet.

Introduction and Background

- 1 On 27 September the Committee received an update on the Shared Services programme and was invited to comment on the proposals.
- 2 The Committee noted that the business case for Shared Services was being reviewed; noted that a number of options were being considered as models for delivering shared services in Herefordshire and that Cabinet would be deciding in October on the options available; and requested that a further report be made to the Committee in advance of the report to Cabinet in October, taking into account the comments made by the Committee at the meeting.
- 3 The report for the Cabinet meeting on 21 October will contain recommendations to proceed with the establishment of shared services arrangements and will be circulated to the Committee upon its publication on 13 October.
- 4 The Committee is asked to provide comment and feedback at its meeting on 18 October which will be reported to the Cabinet by the Chairman at the Cabinet meeting on 21 October.

Appendices

Report to Cabinet on 21 October (To Follow)

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Akif Kazi, Shared Services Team on (01432) 263898

Background Papers

None.

MEETING:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES UPDATE
REPORT BY:	JOINT DIRECTOR OF ICT

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Purpose

To provide a further progress report on Information Communication and Technology (ICT) service issues requested following the scrutiny review of ICT and subsequent updates.

Recommendation(s)

- THAT (a) the report be noted, subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make;**
- and**
- (b) the Committee considers the content and frequency of any further progress reports it wishes to receive.**

Key Points Summary

- Financial reports are now beginning to become available from the social care system, and there is ongoing work to improve the quality of the data in the system. Discussions are being held to determine how these will work when the new finance system is operational as a number of options are available.
- Significant work is being undertaken for the replacement of systems for Finance and HR.
- Markets and Fairs and Waste Management services have now commenced using the Civica APP system, other services are being considered (Strategic Housing).
- Progress is being made to introduce a scanning and document management solution with the Planning service.
- As part of the accommodation strategy, modern and more flexible ways of working are being explored.
- A number of initiatives are being undertaken by the Economic Regeneration Unit to work with broadband suppliers to improve broadband access and speed across Herefordshire.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Zack Pandor, Joint Director of ICT on (01432) 347611

- A pilot project has been initiated to provide front-line staff with mobile equipment to assess efficiency and effectiveness of recording data using such equipment.

Alternative Options

- 1 None.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The report is provided for information.

Introduction and Background

- 3 In March 2010 this Committee received a progress report on Information Communication and Technology (ICT) service issues requested following the scrutiny review of ICT and subsequent updates.
4. The Committee welcomed the progress report and requested a further progress report in 6 months time, noting in particular ongoing work on the interface between the Social Care Frameworki system with the Council's finance system and Civica software packages; and deputed Councillor Bowen to discuss access to the intranet for Members to identify and seek to resolve the apparent problems.

Key Considerations

- 4 Commitment accounting reports are now available from the social care system, Framework-i. Work is ongoing to migrate and continuously improve the quality of data within the social care system, which in turn will lead to increasing accuracy of reports. When the new finance system ('Agresso') is operational, there is additionally the option to provide financial reports through that.
- 5 Finance and HR systems across the council are in the process of being replaced. This is a significant project in that the solution being implemented will work across the local authority and the NHS (including the Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust). The new solution will allow for greater efficiency in staff and budget management. The current plan is to have essential finance and HR functions using the system from 1 April 2011, followed by a roll-out of advanced functionality across the organisations.
- 6 Markets and Fairs and Waste Management services have now commenced using the Civica APP system. Strategic Housing is currently reviewing whether they could take advantage of the system for their service. In addition, those services that have been using the system since the original go-live in November 2008 are reviewing their process to improve use of the system and there is also a piece of work to ensure the data is of good quality. An upgrade of the system is planned in November 2010, which will provide fixes to issues we have raised with the suppliers and some enhanced functionality.
- 7 The Planning service is currently engaged in a project to improve the planning applications process and introduce a scanning and document management solution to replace the current service (which is located out of Herefordshire). The new solution will enable significant improvements to be made in the service.

- 8 Following the approval of the (joint council and NHS) accommodation strategy, technology solutions to enable high efficiency in the usage of office buildings and enabling staff to work more flexibly and productively are being explored.
- 9 Significant activity taken place to improve the county's broadband capability:
- a. The Member of Parliament for Hereford and South Herefordshire organised a Broadband Summit event on 6th September to highlight the poor broadband service in the county. The Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, BT and Rutland Telecom were among the speakers. Rutland Telecom spoke on how they were using fibre optic and local copper circuits from BT to deliver a fast broadband and phone service in their area. Following the event a number of parishes near Ross-on-Wye have approached Rutland Telecom for advice on whether they can bring fast broadband into their areas, and two local IT firms are considering doing something similar in the Shobdon area.
 - b. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) is the organisation appointed by the government to deliver improved broadband services in the UK. They will let contracts for delivery of a 2Mb minimum service during 2011, to be completely rolled out by the end of 2015. In parallel they have announced that they will fund three superfast broadband pilots to provide experience of the issues of delivering fast broadband in hard to reach areas. Herefordshire, backed by Advantage West Midlands, has submitted a bid for the Golden Valley and south border area of Herefordshire to be a pilot area, linked to bids from Wales and Gloucestershire for their adjacent border areas. A decision should be announced in October.
 - c. Linked to the BDUK pilot bid, and BT's attendance at the Broadband Summit, a series of meetings is being held with BT to look at how the broadband service across the county could be improved. BT recently won a contract to provide fast broadband across Northern Ireland and Cornwall. BT's head of fast broadband delivery, Bill Murphy, will be meeting the Chief Executive to discuss how fast broadband might be delivered in Herefordshire. A new broadband policy paper is being prepared to take account of developments and should be presented to JMT in early November. Funding opportunities are being explored.
 - d. Elsewhere in the county Airband Community Internet will be providing a wireless broadband service with up to 16Mb speeds to the north and east of Leominster, funded through the RRZ using EU funds. Equipment is currently being installed and rollout of this service from Leominster will start from 6th November. Allpay Broadband has said that it intends to provide a wireless broadband across the county by Christmas. Allpay currently provides wireless broadband in Kingstone and Allensmore.
- 10 A pilot project has commenced looking at equipping front-line staff with mobile equipment to make the data collection process more efficient. The current trial involves six different groups within Provider Services. The volunteers have been asked to record and transmit data in free flow format. The results require further detailed assessment, however, initial feedback has been positive. There are also national trials being undertaken, which we are obtaining feedback from and feeding our results into.

Community Impact

- 11 Continued investment in ICT ensures the authority is able to deliver effective and efficient services to its customers. Pursuing the broadband agenda with community, business and industry stakeholders has the potential for significant community benefit.

Financial Implications

12 ICT schemes referred to in this report have been budgeted for as part of the authority's financial plans.

Legal Implications

13 Ensuring we are able to:

- accurately collect,
- securely store,
- efficiently use and
- appropriately share data

enables the authority to discharge its legal obligations against a number of acts, including but not limited to:

- Data Protection Act (1998)
- Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000)
- Environmental Information Regulations (2004)

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None.

MEETING:	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	PROJECT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT/FINANCIAL CONTROL OF CAPITAL SCHEMES
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To advise Members on the project management and financial controls in place for Capital Schemes.

Recommendation

THAT: the Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the controls in place.

Key Points Summary

- A wide range of project types and sizes exist.
- Prince 2 Project Management methodology in place.
- JCT (Joint Contract Tribunal) or NEC (New Engineering Contract)
- Procedures for budget costing are in place
- Final account controls are in place

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options as this is a report for noting only

Introduction and Background

- 2 In June the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee requested that a full report on how major school building projects had been administered e.g. Riverside Primary School be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that learning and good practice was being

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Colin Birks, Property Operations Manager on (01432) 261980

incorporated into future projects.

Key Considerations

- 3 Asset Management & Property Services (AMPS) is responsible for a wide range of project types and sizes ranging from a minor improvement/maintenance scheme costing a few thousand pounds to a £22 million High School.
- 4 AMPS carries out work for Directorates within the council, external organisations such as Voluntary Aided Schools and projects commissioned by Schools.
- 5 In revenue terms AMPS spends about £3.5 million revenue and £10 to £12 million capital per annum.
- 6 In addition to professionally qualified surveyors, engineers and architects, specific staff are also trained in Prince 2 project management methodology. These trained staff support the projects undertaken.
- 7 Where Prince 2 is used on the larger schemes this involves forming a project team and a project board. The project manager is appointed and he/she leads the project team and reports to the project board. For construction type projects a qualified professional e.g. RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors) or RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) is generally recognised as the most suitable to act as the project manager.
- 8 The projects are developed upon the RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) Outline Plan of work 2007 which is the industry's recognised method of developing construction projects from approval through to completion.
- 9 AMPS subscribes to a number of organisations in order to obtain up to date cost information. The common one used on building projects is the BCIS (Building Cost Information Service). It provides budget and elemental cost information details for many of the common building functions.
- 10 In addition to the services AMPS also purchases industry recognised costing books including Spons and Griffiths pricing books.
- 11 In addition to the standard costing databases there is also a construction and engineering cost index which can be used to inform costs on an annual basis.
- 12 The method used to prepare cost information will vary throughout the project. At the initial preparation and design stages the cost plan is normally based upon a square meter basis. This is then checked against typical similar projects held on the BCIS database. As an example a 630 place Primary School would have an approximate floor area of 3400m² based upon the recommendations of the School Premises Regulations. (The approximate cost of constructing a School in the West Midlands area is in the region of £1950 per m²). Additional costs are then added for professional services, furniture and IT. Costs are also added for the utilities e.g. gas, water, electricity and drainage using actual budget costs, where possible, for approximate costs based on experience.
- 13 Once further details of the site and the design are known an elemental costing is prepared. This is based on the principal elements of the building e.g. roof, walls, foundations, electrics, heating and finishes.
- 14 Any (what are known as) site abnormalities are allowed for e.g. contamination of the site, special foundation requirements or a difficult site to build on.

- 15 The design information is then developed to include the construction detailing specifications, schedules and what are known as prime costs for works that cannot be clearly defined or detailed.
- 16 Depending on the size of the project and its complexity, it is then either presented in the form of a specification and drawings or a Bill of Quantities and drawings.
- 17 The larger and more complex projects tend to be in the form of a Bill of Quantities and the simple projects are a specification and drawing.
- 18 Tenders are then sought for the works using one of the above methods. The method of procurement would be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and if the building project exceeds approximately £3.4 million an OJEU (Official Journal of European Union) procedure and European Rules apply.
- 19 There are a number of variations on this standard procedure for procuring works; these include –
- A pre-priced schedule of rates. The Council uses both the OGC (Office of Government Contracts) and Pillar Consultancy schedules for specific types of works.
 - Framework contract – the Council used the Academy framework to procure the new Hereford Academy and a framework called Scape to procure the Livestock Market. In addition it is one of the partnering authorities in the new West Midlands Framework Contract.
- 20 Tenders are sought from approved contractors and opened in accordance with Standing Orders.
- 21 Once the tenders have been opened they are checked arithmetically and technically for errors and a formal tender report is prepared. This will be undertaken by the Quantity Surveyor for the larger schemes and the scheme surveyor for the smaller projects. Any comments will be included in the report on whether the project offers value for money.
- 22 Once it is confirmed that the tender is free of errors and offers good value, on-costs such as fees etc. mentioned previously, are added to the tender and the cost is reported to the Client/Directorate.
- 23 If acceptable authorisation is obtained and a contract placed. The JCT (Joint Contracts Tribunal) tends to be the most common contract used; however, the NEC contract has been used for the Amey partnership and the West Midlands Framework.
- 24 Once the contract is 'live' interim valuations are undertaken as the contract proceeds. These involve valuing the works undertaken to date and materials actually held on site. The normal valuation period is 28 days and a 5% retention is taken off each valuation. The invoice is then passed for payment.
- 25 Under the JCT form of contract only what is known as the 'contract administrator' is allowed to instruct the contractor on any variations to the works. Any omissions or additions to the contract are authorised using a pre-printed variation sheet which is issued to the contractor.
- 26 When the contract reaches the stage of practical completion the contract administrator issues what is known as a 'practical completion certificate' and the retention reduces from 5% to 2.5%.

- 27 This 2.5% is then held for what is known as the 'defects liability period' for 12 months. Should any defects occur in the works during this 12 month period the main contractor should remedy the defects. If they fail to do so another contractor can be engaged to remedy the defects and the costs taken out of this retention.
- 28 At the end of the 12 month period a completion certificate is issued and the retention released.
- 29 Within the contract figure there is usually a contingency item and prime cost item (previously defined). The main contractor is responsible for obtaining fixed costs for the prime cost item(s) and if these are acceptable a variation instruction is given. These contingencies cover unknown items on the contract which sometimes occur e.g. the need to lay extra concrete because of soft spots on the site.
- 30 Different types of contracts have different percentage retentions and the defects period can vary depending on the needs of the Client.
- 31 Final accounts often involve protracted negotiations between both the contractor, Quantity Surveyor and the Client's Quantity Surveyor. If agreement on a final account figure cannot be reached the contract does allow for mediation and arbitration.
- 32 Throughout the contract on the larger projects a monthly report is prepared on any variations to the contract figure. Each valuation will have a projected final account figure. This is reported to the Board on the large projects in accordance with the Prince 2 method of project management.
- 33 Upon completion of the project a pro forma is completed for BCIS cost database and an evaluation is undertaken on the variations. IT costs, fees and furniture costs are added and a total project cost is prepared.

Community Impact

34. The delivery of the various schemes in the programme affects communities in various ways. These projects include improving school sites.

Financial Implications

35. The report does not have financial implications but effective project management assists delivery of schemes to budget.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

MEETING:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	WORK PROGRAMME
REPORT BY:	COMMITTEE MANAGER (SCRUTINY)

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To consider the Committee's work programme.

Recommendation

THAT the current work programme be approved as a basis for further development, subject to any comment the Committee wishes to make.

Introduction and Background

1. This Committee is responsible for overseeing, co-ordinating and approving the work programmes of the scrutiny committees and approving its own annual work programme. It is also required to periodically review its and the scrutiny committees work programmes to ensure that overview and scrutiny is effective, that there is an efficient use of scrutiny resources and that potential duplication of effort by scrutiny members is minimised.
2. A report on the work programmes of all Scrutiny Committees' will be made to this Committee quarterly. A copy of this Committee's own work programme will be made to each of its scheduled meetings. A copy of the Committee's current work programmes is appended.
3. The Committee's programme may be modified by the Chairman following consultation with the Vice-Chairman and the Directors in response to changing circumstances.
4. Should any urgent, prominent or high profile issue arise, the Chairman may consider calling an additional meeting to consider that issue.
5. Should Members become aware of any issues they consider may be added to the scrutiny programme they should contact the Chairman or Democratic Services to log the issue so that it may be taken into consideration when planning future agendas or when revising the work programme.

Progress in response to recommendations made and issues raised by the Committee

6. A note showing progress in response to recommendations made and issues raised by the Committee is also appended.

Background Papers

- None identified.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – work programme 2010/11

	29 November 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Corporate Performance Report • Budget Monitoring Report • Corporate Risk • Budget Consultation • Accommodation Strategy
	17 December 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Development Framework
	14 January 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 2011/12 for comment • Medium Term Financial Strategy • Cabinet response to Scrutiny Review of External Communication
	21 February 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Corporate Performance Report • Budget Monitoring Report
	25 March 2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Scrutiny Review of Winter Weather - Update
Other issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of Affordable Housing Options • Herefordshire Public Services – possible consideration of effectiveness of working arrangements • Herefordshire Partnership 	

Further additions to the work programme will be made as required

Progress in response to recommendations made and issues raised by the Strategic Monitoring Committee

March 10-Information Communication and Technology Services Update	
Recommendations	Response/Action
<p>(b) a further progress report be made in 6 months time, noting in particular ongoing work on the interface between the Social Care Frameworki system with the Council's finance system and Civica software packages; and</p> <p>(c) Councillor WLS Bowen be deputed to discuss access to the intranet for Members to identify and seek to resolve the apparent problems.</p>	<p>Report on agenda for 18 October.</p> <p>Work being undertaken.</p>
July 10 – Annual Corporate Performance Report 2009/10	
<p>the outcome of the Children's Services Committee's consideration of Key Stage 1 & 2 performance, scheduled for consideration 22 October, be reported to this Committee on 29 November</p>	<p>Report Scheduled.</p>
<p>1. the Committee recommends to Cabinet that in principle the LAA targets be retained, however: Cabinet should consider whether any of the targets can sensibly be amalgamated or joined up to those used by the PCT. Only those targets that can realistically be achieved should be retained.</p>	<p>Reported to Cabinet September 10. Cabinet noted the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the indicators in the Local Area Agreement, and agreed that the opportunity be taken to review the indicators and projects that are in the Joint Corporate Plan 2010-13, using the forthcoming review of the Joint Corporate Plan 2010-13 to do this.</p>
<p>The report resulting from the review being undertaken by Constitutional Review Working Group (CRWG) incorporating the wider organisational work stream on Regulatory Functions be circulated to Committee Members;</p>	<p>To be circulated when review complete.</p>
<p>A briefing note be issued to members of Overview & Scrutiny; Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committees setting out how improvements were being made to address the underperformance against NI131 target 'delayed transfer of care from hospitals'.</p>	<p>Report made to Health Scrutiny Committee. Updated report being prepared for wider circulation.</p>
September 2010 – Integrated Corporate Performance Report	
<p>A briefing note be provided on the eight</p>	<p>To be circulated.</p>

risks in the Corporate Risk Register which required the appropriate Director to review and update the Register entry.	
September 10 – Budget Monitoring Report	
<p>Briefing notes be circulated on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the use of the spend to save reserve. -recoupment of Dedicated Schools grant for the Hereford Academy and the implications of John Kyrle High School achieving academy status; - how school balances held by the authority were managed; <p>and the outcome of negotiations on the SHAW contract</p>	<p>To be circulated</p> <p>Circulated 7 October</p> <p>Circulated 7 October</p> <p>To be circulated</p>